



Shift the AfDB's support from Gas to Sustainable Renewable Energy

The African Development Bank (AfDB) plays a pivotal role in shaping economic development across the continent. As the demand for energy in Africa rises, it's imperative to steer investments towards sustainable solutions. This briefing outlines the key objectives for urging the AfDB to halt direct and indirect support for gas and redirect its investments into sustainable renewable energy initiatives for economic development.






Africa is disproportionately affected by climate change, facing real threats like on-going droughts, floods, and desertification. Transitioning to sustainable renewables aligns with global climate goals, mitigating the adverse effects of greenhouse gas emissions and fostering climate resilience.



Senegal has become central in the new dash for fossil gas in Africa, presenting huge risks of harm for communities and ecosystems. The AfDB must withdraw funding for new gas projects, including any direct or indirect financing for the Sendou coal-fired power plant to switch to gas.

Mamadou Barry, Action Solidaire International, Senegal

WE ASK THAT THE AFDB:

-  Cease all financing, technical and policy support for new gas projects, including exploration, extraction, liquefaction, transportation, and power generation.
-  Phase out existing investments in gas infrastructure and fossil fuel-related activities, prioritising the rapid transition to sustainable renewable energy and energy efficiency.
-  Redirect policy and financial resources towards community-led, renewable energy initiatives that prioritise energy sovereignty, social equity, and ecological sustainability.
-  Ensure full transparency and accountability in its energy financing decisions, including meaningful consultation with affected communities and adherence to international human rights standards.
-  Embrace a just transition framework that centres the needs and aspirations of workers, communities, and ecosystems affected by the shift away from fossil fuels.

THE TROUBLE WITH GAS:

As the impacts of climate change have become undeniable, people are waking up to the fact that gas is not inherently a "clean" fuel, and its human and environmental impact can be extreme.

In **Mozambique for example**, the construction of the Afungi Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) park destroyed farmlands, forests and shoreline, places that are home to many animals and plants as well as local communities that are highly dependent on the land and the ocean for their livelihoods. Women involved in farming lost their lands and livelihoods and also had their access to clean water for domestic use compromised.

Also, as **methane** is the primary component of gas, it has a much higher global warming potential than carbon dioxide over a short time frame. Leakage of methane during the extraction, production, processing, and transportation of fossil gas significantly increases its carbon footprint. Even small leaks can negate the climate benefits of burning fossil gas compared to coal or oil.

Another problem with gas is **incomplete combustion** and the release of other pollutants such as carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides which contribute to air pollution and have negative health impacts, particularly in densely populated areas. When methane leakage and other non-combustion emissions are considered, gas has comparable or even higher greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions than coal or oil on a per-unit energy basis.

Historically, gas has been a significant component of Africa's energy mix. However, reliance on fossil fuels exacerbates environmental degradation and contributes to climate change. Transitioning to renewable energy sources such as sustainable wind, solar, and hydroelectric power is essential for achieving long-term climate goals and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

ACCELERATE RENEWABLE POTENTIAL:

Africa boasts immense renewable energy potential, including solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal resources. Leveraging these can drive economic growth, mitigate climate risks, and foster energy independence. The AfDB must set ambitious targets for investment in renewable energy projects including wind, solar and small scale hydro across Africa, aligned with the continent's energy needs and climate objectives.

Renewable energy technologies have become increasingly cost-competitive, with declining prices of solar panels and wind turbines. Redirecting funds from gas to renewables offers long-term financial viability, reducing reliance on volatile fossil fuel markets and promoting energy security.

The AfDB must prioritise financing for renewable energy infrastructure, including grid modernisation, energy storage solutions, and decentralised off-grid systems to enhance energy access and integrate climate resilience considerations into the design and implementation of renewable energy projects to enhance Africa's adaptive capacity to climate change impacts.

The AfDB must ensure that renewable energy projects are inclusive and benefit all segments of society, including marginalised communities and vulnerable populations. The bank must also foster transparent and inclusive decision-making processes, engaging with civil society organisations, local communities, and other stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle.



The transition to clean energy is not only an environmental imperative but also a moral obligation, requiring equity and justice for marginalised communities, particularly women. This transition can lead to shared prosperity, sustainable economic growth, and reduced pollution.

Gloria Kafui Kuzo, Strategic Youth Network for Development, Ghana

ENERGY ACCESS:

In a welcome move in April 2024, the AfDB committed to connect 50 million people to electricity through distributed renewable energy systems. But millions of Africans lack access to reliable electricity, hindering socio-economic progress. Investing in renewable energy infrastructure enables decentralised energy access, reaching remote communities and empowering underserved populations. The renewable energy sector offers vast employment opportunities, spanning construction, manufacturing, installation, and maintenance. By investing in renewables, the AfDB can catalyse job creation and foster skills development across the continent.



Access to clean cooking for communities in Africa is an urgent necessity, and renewable energy can provide that solution. African people must not be entrapped into using toxic fossil gas in the name of energy access

Grace Ronoh, Africa Finance Campaign Manager, Recourse

CONCLUSION:

It is essential that the AfDB redirect financial and policy support away from gas to sustainable renewable energy to foster inclusive economic development, mitigate climate change, and ensure energy access for all Africans. The AfDB must shift its investment priorities and catalyse a transformative energy transition that benefits both current and future generations across the continent.

Kraijenhoffstraat 137A
1018 RG Amsterdam
The Netherlands
www.re-course.org

